

amended the application to set forth the correct spelling of the term "discrete".

Applicants respectfully assert that such a misspelling was an obvious grammatical error and does not constitute new matter.

In the initial Office Action, the Examiner allowed claims 27-48. Additionally, the Examiner stated that claims 8 and 9 would be allowable if rewritten into independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, Applicants have incorporated the limitations of dependent claim 8 into independent claim 1 as indicated above.

Moreover, Applicants also respectfully submit that independent claim 1, as amended, patentably defines over each of the references listed on the Information Disclosure Statement recently filed. In particular, none of these references, taken singularly or in combination, disclose or suggest a nonwoven web or laminate as set forth in the present claims. As such, for at least this reason, Applicants believe that the pending claims patentably define over all of these above references.

In addition, U.S. Patent Nos. 4,095,007 to Marshall and 5,425,987 to Shawver were also cited to reject dependent claims 2-7 and 10-15. Applicants respectfully submit, however, that at least for the reasons indicated above relating to corresponding independent claim 1, claims 2-7 and 10-15 patentably define over the references cited. However, Applicants also note that the patentability of dependent claims 2-7 and 10-15 certainly does not hinge on the patentability of independent claim 1. In particular, these claims possess features that are independently patentable, regardless of the patentability of claim 1.

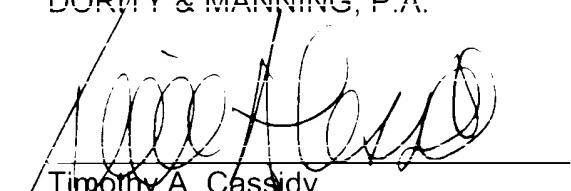
In summary, it is respectfully submitted that the claims as presently amended

meet all of the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentably distinct over the prior art of record. Thus, it is submitted that the present application is in complete condition for allowance. Should any issues remain after consideration of the present response, however, Examiner Torres-Velazquez is invited and encouraged to telephone the undersigned at his convenience.

Please charge any additional fees required by this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 04-1403.

Respectfully requested,

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